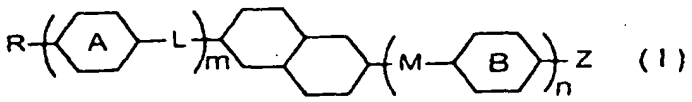
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 18 without prejudice or disclaimer and amend claims 17 and 18, as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously presented) A compound represented by general formula (I) :



(I)

(wherein, R and Z may be substituted with a halogen and represent alkyl groups or alkoxy groups having 1-16 carbon atoms, alkenyl groups having 2-16 carbon atoms, alkenyloxy groups having 3-16 carbon atoms, alkyl groups having 1-12 carbon atoms substituted with an alkoxy group having 1-10 carbon atoms, hydrogen atoms, fluorine atoms, chlorine atoms, trifluoromethoxy groups, difluoromethoxy groups, trifluoromethyl groups, 2,2, 2 - trifluoroethoxy groups, cyano groups, cyanato groups, hydroxy groups or carboxy groups, m and n may be the same or different and respectively and independently represent an integer of 0-2, $1 \leq m+n \leq 3$, L and M may be the same or different and respectively and independently represent $-CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH(CH_3)CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH(CH_3)-$, $-CH_2O-$, $-OCH_2-$, $-CF_2O-$, $-OCF_2-$, -COO-, -OCO-, -CH=CH-, -CF=CF-, $-C\equiv C-$, $-O(CH_2)_3-$, $-(CH_2)_3O-$, $-(CH_2)_4-$ or a single bond, rings A and B when present may be the same or different and respectively and independently represent a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group in which one CH_2 group or more than one non-adjacent CH_2 groups in the group may be replaced by -O- or -S-, a 1,4-

phenylene group in which one CH_2 group or more than one non-adjacent CH_2 groups in the group may be replaced by -N=, a 1,4-cyclohexenylene group, 1,4-bicyclo(2,2,2)octylene group, piperidine-1,4-diyl group, naphthalene-2,6-diyl group, trans-decahydronaphthalene-trans-2,6-diyl group or 1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, and although these may be substituted with a cyano group or halogen, in the case m or n represents 2, at least one of the two L or M present represents a single bond; provided that the following cases are excluded:

i. case in which either m or n represents 1, the other of m or n represents 0, ring A or ring B when present represents a 1,4-cyclohexylene group, L or M when present represents a single bond, R or Z bonded to a decahydronaphthalene ring represents a non-substituted alkyl group, and R or Z bonded to a 1,4-cyclohexylene group represents a non-substituted alkyl group, alkoxy group or alkenyloxy group;

ii. case in which either m or n represents 1, the other m or n represents 0, ring A or ring B when present represents a 1,4-cyclohexylene group, L when present represents -OCO- or M when present represents -COO-, and R or Z bonded to a 1,4-cyclohexylene group represents a non-substituted alkyl group or cyano group;

iii. case in which either m or n represents 1, the other m or n represents 0, ring A or ring B when present represents a non-substituted 1,4-phenylene group, L when present represents -OCO- or M when present represents -COO-, L or M when present represents a single bond, and R or Z bonded to a 1,4-phenylene group represents a non-substituted alkyl group, alkoxy group, hydroxyl group, hydrogen atom, carboxyl group or cyano group;

iv. case in which either m or n represents 1, the other m or n represents 0, ring A or ring B when present represent a non-substituted 1,4-phenylene group, L or M when present represents a single bond, R or Z bonded to a decahydronaphthalene ring represents a non-substituted alkoxy group, and R or Z bonded to a 1,4-phenylene group represents a non-substituted alkyl group;

v. case in which either m or n represents 1, the other m or n represents 0, ring A or ring B when present represents a trans-decahydronaphthalene-trans-2,6-diyl group, L when present represents -OCO-, M when present represents -COO- or L or M when present represent a single bond, and R and Z represent non-substituted alkoxy groups;

vi. case in which either m or n represents 1, the other m or n represents 0, ring A or ring B when present represents a non-substituted naphthalene-2,6-diyl group, L when present represents -OCO- or M when present represents -COO-, R or Z bonded to a decahydronaphthalene ring represents a non-substituted alkyl group, and R or Z bonded to a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group represents a non-substituted alkyl group, bromine atom or cyano group, or the case in which R or Z bonded to a decahydronaphthalene ring represents a non-substituted alkoxy group, and R or Z bonded to a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group represents a non-substituted alkyl group or cyano group;

vii. case in which n represents 2, m represents 0, R represents a non-substituted alkyl group, M when present adjacent to a decahydronaphthalene ring represents -COO-, at least one of rings B present represents a non-substituted 1,4-phenylene group, and Z represents a non-substituted alkyl group or bromine atom, or the case in which at least one of rings B present represents a pyrimidine-2,5-diyl group, and Z represents a non-substituted alkyl group, alkoxy group or cyano group; and

viii. case in which m and n represent 1, ring A represents a trans-decahydronaphthalene-trans-2,6-diyl group or a 1,4-cyclohexylene group, ring B represents a non-substituted 1,4-phenylene group or 1,4-cyclohexylene group, L represents a single bond, M represents -COO-, -OCO-, $-CH_2O-$ or $-OCH_2-$, and R and Z represent non-substituted alkyl groups.

Claim 2 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, ring A and ring B when present respectively and independently represent a 1,4-phenylene group, naphthalene-2,6-diyl group, 1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group or decahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group that may be substituted with fluorine atom(s).

Claim 3 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, ring A or ring B when present respectively and independently represent a 1,4-phenylene group or trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group that may be substituted with fluorine atom(s).

Claim 4 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, L and M when present represent - CH_2CH_2-, $-CH_2O-$, $-OCH_2-$, $-CF_2O-$, $-OCF_2-$, -COO-, -OCO-, -CF=CF- or a single bond.

Claim 5 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, L or M represents a single bond.

Claim 6 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, L and M represent single bonds.

Claim 7 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, $1 \leq m + n \leq 2$.

Clam 8 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, R represents an alkyl group, alkoxy group, alkenyl group or alkenyloxy group having 1-12 carbon atoms.

Claim 9 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, Z represents a halogen atom or an alkyl group, alkoxy group, alkenyl group, alkenyloxy group or cyano group having 1-12 carbon atoms.

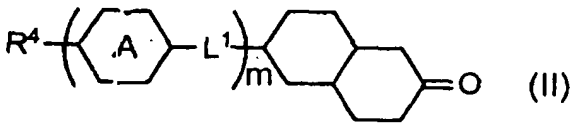
Claim 10 (Previously presented): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, R represents an alkyl group or alkenyl group having 1-12 carbon atoms, m represents 1, n represents 1, ring A represents a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group, ring B represents a 3-fluoro-1,4-phenylene group or 3,5-difluoro-1,4-phenylene group, L and M represent single bonds, and Z represents a fluorine atom, chlorine atom, trifuoromethoxy group, difluoromethoxy group, trifluoromethyl group, 2,2,2-trifluoroethoxy group or cyano group.

Claim 11 (Previously presented): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, R represents an alkyl group or alkenyl group having 1-12 carbon atoms, m represents 0, n represents 1, ring B represents a 3-fluoro-1,4-phenylene group or 3,5-difluoro-1,4-phenylene group, M represents a single bond and Z represents a fluorine atom, chlorine atom, trifluoromethoxy group, difluoromethoxy group, trifluoromethyl group, 2,2,2-trifluoroethyoxy group or cyano group.

Claim 12 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, R and Z represent alkyl groups or alkenyl groups having 1-12 carbon atoms, m and n represent 1, rings A and B represent 1,4-phenylene groups or trans-1,4-cyclohexylene groups, and L and M represent single bonds.

Claim 13 (Original): A compound according to claim 1 wherein, R and Z represent alkyl groups or alkenyl groups having 1-12 carbon atoms, at least one of R or Z represents an alkenyl group, m represents 1, n represents 0, rings A and B represent 1,4-phenylene groups or trans-1,4-cyclohexylene groups, and L represents a single bond.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): A compound represented by general formula (II):

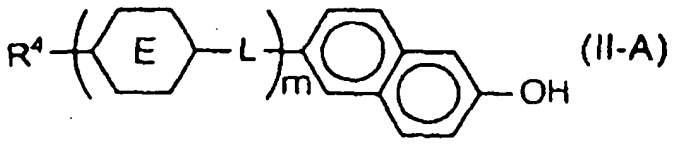


(II)

(wherein, R^4 represents an alkyl group, alkyoxy group, alkenyl group, alkenyloxy group or alkoxyalkyl group, L^1 represents $-CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH(CH_3)CH_2-$, $CH_2CH(CH_3)-$, $-CH_2O-$, $-OCH_2-$, $-CF_2O-$, $-OCF_2-$, -COO-, -OCO-, -CH=CH-, -CF=CF-, $-C\equiv C-$, $-O(CH_2)_3-$, $-(CH_2)_3O-$, $-(CH_2)_4-$, or a single bond, R^4 represents an alkenyl group, alkenyloxy group or alkyoxyalkyl group when L^1 represents a single bond, ring A represents a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group in which one CH_2 group or more than one non-adjacent CH_2 groups in the group may be replaced by -O- or -S-, a 1,4-phenylene group in which one CH_2 group or more than one non-adjacent CH_2 groups in the group may be replaced by -N=, a 1,4-cyclohexenylene group, 1,4-bicyclo(2,2,2)octylene group,

piperidine-1,4-diyl group, naphthalene-2, 6-diyl group, trans-decahydronaphthalene-trans-2,6-diyl group or 1,2,3,4-tetrahydronaphthalene-2, 6-diyl group, m represents an integer of 1 or 2, and the decahydronaphthalene ring has a trans form).

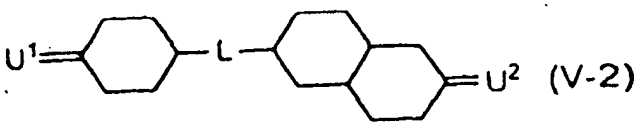
Claim 15 (Previously presented): A production method of general formula (II) according to claim 14 including: reducing a compound represented by general formula (II-A):



(II-A)

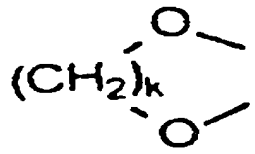
(wherein, R^4 is the same as previously defined in general formula (II), ring E represents a 1,4-phenyl group or trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group, L is the same as L^1 defined in general formula (II), and m is the same as previously defined in general formula (II), and the decahydronaphthalene ring has a trans form), and oxidizing the hydroxyl group as necessary.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): A compound represented by general formula (V-2):



(V-2)

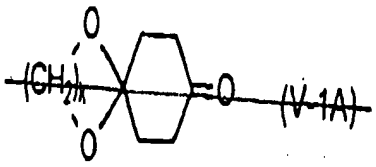
(wherein, U^1 and U^2 respectively and independently represent an oxygen atom or the following structure:

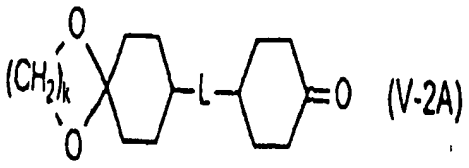


(wherein, k represents an integer from 1 to 7), L represents $-CH_2CH_2-$, $-CH(CH_3)CH_2-$, $-CH_2CH(CH_3)-$, $-CH_2O-$, $-OCH_2-$, $-CF_2O-$, $-OCF_2-$, $-COO-$, $-OCO-$, $-CH=CH-$, $-CF=CF-$, $-C\equiv C-$, $-O(CH_2)_3-$, $-(CH_2)_3O-$, $-(CH_2)_4-$ or a single bond, and the decahydronaphthalene ring has a trans form).

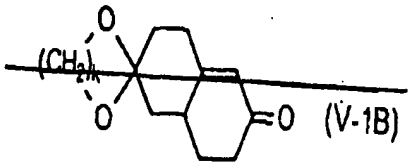
Claim 17 (Currently amended): A production method of general formula (V-2) ~~or general formula (V-1)~~ according to claim 16,

including: converting a compound represented by ~~general formula (V-1A) or~~ general formula (V-2A):

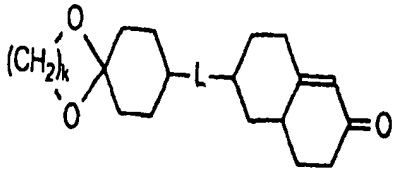




(wherein, k and L are the same as previously defined in claim 16) into an enamine using a secondary amine, and reacting it with methyl vinyl ketone to obtain a compound represented by ~~general formula (V-1B) or~~ general formula (V-2B)



(V-1B)

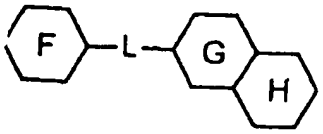


(V-2B)

(wherein, k and L are the same as previously defined in claim 16) followed by reductive hydrogenation.

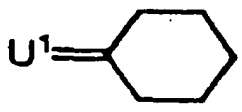
Claim 18 (Canceled).

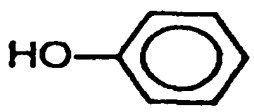
Claim 19 (Currently amended): A production method of general formula (V-2) according to claim 16 including: reducing a compound represented by general formula (V-2C):

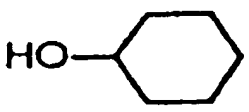


(V-2C)

(wherein, although ring G represents a cyclohexane ring or benzene ring, a single bond(s) of the cyclohexane ring may be replaced by double bond(s), and although rings F and H respectively and independently represent the following structures:

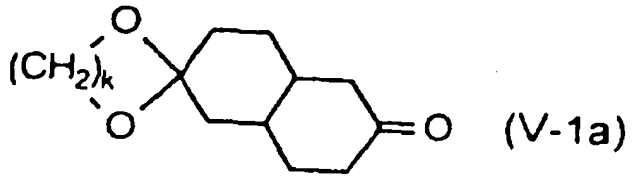






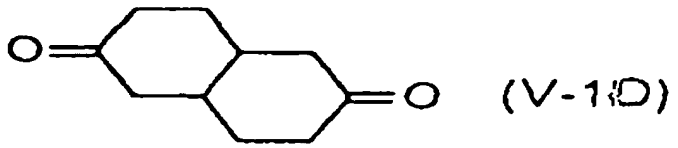
~~(wherein, U^1 is the same as previously defined in general formula (V-1) or general formula (V-2))~~, a single bond(s) of the cyclohexane ring may be replaced by double bond(s)), oxidizing the hydroxyl group as necessary, and further protecting the carbonyl group as necessary.

Claim 20 (Previously presented): A production method of general formula (V-1a):



(V-1a)

(wherein k represents an integer from 1 to 7) including monoacetalation of a compound represented by general formula (V-1D):



(V-1D)

Claim 21 (Previously presented): A liquid crystal composition containing a compound according to claim 1.

Claim 22 (Previously presented): A liquid crystal device having for its constituent feature the liquid crystal composition according to claim 21.

Claim 23 (Previously presented): An active matrix drive, liquid crystal device that uses the liquid crystal composition according to claim 21.

Claim 24 (Previously presented): A super twisted nematic liquid crystal device that uses the liquid crystal composition according to claim 21.